

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02  
INT-05 CU-02 AID-05 EB-07 EPG-02 TRSE-00 STR-04  
OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00 FRB-03 XMB-02 OPIC-03  
LAB-04 SIL-01 FEA-01 OES-07 DLOS-09 AGRE-00 /163 W  
-----060322Z 018554 /70

R 051535Z MAY 77  
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3453  
INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO  
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN  
AMEMBASSY SUVA  
AMEMBASSY TUNIS  
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USUN 1376

DEPT PASS TO INTERIOR (OTA)

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, UN, VQ, FJ, ML, TU, TD  
SUBJ: COMMITTEE OF 24 (C-24) VISITING MISSION TO THE  
US VIRGIN ISLANDS: WRAP-UP

REF: A) USUN 1193, B) STATE 89804 (NOTAL)

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: THE COMMITTEE OF 24 VISITING MISSION COMPOSED OF REPRESENTATIVES OF FIJI (VUNIBOBO), TUNISIA (BACHROUCH), TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO (SEALY), AND MALI (DIAKITE), AND ACCOMPANIED BY FOUR SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS, MADE AN OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS FROM APRIL 23 TO MAY 2. THE MISSION GENERALLY ADHERED TO THE SCHEDULE TRANSMITTED IN REF B. A PUBLIC MEETING WAS HELD ON EACH OF THE THREE MAIN ISLANDS AS AGREED TO BY  
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GOVERNOR KING AND SENATE PRESIDENT ROEBUCK.

2. THE SENATE WAS GENERALLY SKEPTICAL OF THE UTILITY OF THE MISSION. SUBJECTS RAISED AT PUBLIC MEETINGS WERE: THE IMMIGRATION PROBLEM, VOTING IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS, GREATER AUTONOMY AND CONTROL OF LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE VIRGIN ISLANDS' CRITICISM OF TEACHING AND

THE CURRICULUM, CRITICISM OF THE NATIONAL PARK ON ST. JOHN, AND INFLATION, CRIME AND UNEMPLOYMENT. AMBASSADOR VUNIBOBO EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION ABOUT THE MISSION AND SPECIAL APPRECIATION FOR GOVERNOR KING'S GENEROUS HOSPITALITY. SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL KUO ASSURED US THAT THE MISSION'S REPORT WOULD BE "FACTUAL AND OBJECTIVE." USUN RECOMMENDS THAT THE DEPARTMENT EXPRESS ITS APPRECIATION AT AN APPROPRIATELY HIGH LEVEL TO GOVERNOR KING. END INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE. IN ADDITION TO THOSE LISTED IN REF A, THE MISSION WAS ACCOMPANIED BY KIBBE FITZPATRICK (USA), A FRENCH-ENGLISH INTERPRETER FROM THE SECRETARIAT, AT THE REQUEST OF MALIAN MISSION OFFICER DIAKITE. ALTHOUGH USUN WAS ASSURED BY THE TUNISIAN MISSION THAT TUNISIAN MISSOFF BACHROUCH HAD A VALID REENTRY VISA, IT HAD, IN FACT, EXPIRED IN 1976 AND HIS ARRIVAL IN ST. THOMAS WAS DELAYED BY ONE DAY. (USUN IS GRATEFUL FOR EMBASSY KINGSTON'S WEEKEND ISSUANCE OF THE REQUIRED VISA.) THE MISSION GENERALLY ADHERED TO THE SCHEDULE CONTAINED IN REF B. A PUBLIC MEETING IN EACH OF THE THREE ISLANDS WAS HELD WITH THE AGREEMENT OF THE GOVERNOR AND SENATE PRESIDENT ROEBUCK. IN ADDITION, THE MISSION HAD AN ADDITIONAL MEETING WITH GOVERNOR KING AND KEY MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF AND HELD AN ADDITIONAL PRESS CONFERENCE ON MONDAY, APRIL 25, AT ITS REQUEST.

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4. HOSPITALITY. GOVERNOR KING'S EXTRAORDINARY HOSPITALITY WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN MAKING A VERY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION ON THE MISSION. HE HOSTED TWO RECEPTIONS AND NUMEROUS LUNCHESES FOR THE MISSION AND INVITED MISSION MEMBERS TO SHARE THE REVIEWING STAND WITH HIM FOR BOTH CARNIVAL PARADES. THE GOVERNOR ALSO MADE HIMSELF AND MEMBERS OF HIS STAFF AVAILABLE TO THE MISSION, PROVIDED A SPECIAL ESCORT OFFICER TO ACCOMPANY THE MISSION (A RETIRED FSIO), ORGANIZED A SCHEDULE WHICH FULLY MET THE MISSION'S REQUIREMENTS AND PROVIDED GROUND TRANSPORTATION DURING THE MISSION'S ENTIRE VISIT. VUNIBOBO, THE OTHER MISSION MEMBERS, AND THE SECRETARYAT PERSONNEL ALL COMMENTED VERY FAVORABLY ON THE HOSPITALITY EXTENDED TO THEM.

5. THE MISSION'S ROLE. IN INTRODUCTORY REMARKS AT EVERY MEETING, VUNIBOBO EMPHASIZED THAT THE MISSION'S MANDATE WAS TO GATHER FACTS ON THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC,

SOCIAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORY  
AND NOT TO MEDDLE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OR ATTEMPT

TO IMPOSE ITS WILL ON THE PEOPLE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.  
HE CHARACTERIZED THE US DECISION TO INVITE THE MISSION  
AS A "SIGNIFICANT" AND "MAJOR" CHANGE IN US POLICY.

6. MEETING WITH GOVERNOR AND CABINET. AT AN INITIAL  
MEETING WITH GOVERNOR KING AND HIS ENTIRE 20-PERSON  
CABINET, THE MISSION HEARD EXTENSIVE REMARKS  
BY GOVERNOR KING AND BRIEF PRESENTATIONS BY EACH COMMISSIONER,  
AND THEN HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS. INTER  
ALIA, KING CORDIALLY WELCOMED THE MISSION, SAID HE  
WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTIONS TO PUBLIC MEETINGS, WHICH THE  
MISSION REQUESTED, IF THE SENATE DID NOT OBJECT, AND  
EMPHASIZED THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO INDEPENDENCE  
SENTIMENT IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. HE SAID THAT THE  
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BEST COURSE FOR THE VIRGIN ISLANDS IS TO REMAIN AN  
UNINCORPORATED TERRITORY OF THE US WITH INCREASING  
INTERNAL SELF-GOVERNMENT. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE  
VIRGIN ISLANDS EXERCISES THE SAME INTERNAL SELF-  
GOVERNMENT AS ANY STATE OF THE UNION. QUESTIONS BY THE MISSION  
CONCERNED INTER ALIA CRIME, AGRICULTURE, FISHING,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, FEDERAL FUNDING. AT A SECOND  
MEETING WITH KING, THE COMMISSIONERS OF COMMERCE,  
LABOR, EDUCATION AND HOUSING RESPONDED TO ADDITIONAL  
QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE MISSION.

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10  
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00  
NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02  
INT-05 CU-02 AID-05 EB-07 EPG-02 TRSE-00 STR-04  
OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00 FRB-03 XMB-02 OPIC-03  
LAB-04 SIL-01 FEA-01 OES-07 DLOS-09 AGRE-00 /163 W  
-----052003Z 021719 /70

R 051535Z MAY 77  
FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3454  
INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO  
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USUN 1376

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7. MEETING WITH SENATE: MANY MEMBERS OF THE FIFTEEN-PERSON SENATE EXPRESSED DOUBT ABOUT THE VALUE OF THE MISSION AND CONCERN ABOUT ITS TIMING (DURING CARNIVAL) AND LACK OF ADVANCE NOTICE. THE SENATE WAS THE MOST HOSTILE GROUP THE MISSION ENCOUNTERED. SOME SENATORS EXPRESSED THE NEED FOR GREATER AUTONOMY, POINTING OUT THAT VIRGIN ISLANDERS ARE NOT NOW IN A POSITION TO MAKE CRUCIAL DECISIONS (SUCH AS WHO CAN ENTER THE TERRITORY). THE MISSION DID NOT RESPOND TO A QUERY ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF VIRGIN ISLAND OBSERVER STATUS IN THE UN. VARIOUS SENATORS EXPRESSED PRIDE AT BEING PART OF THE US AND GRATITUDE FOR US ASSISTANCE. SOME SENATORS SAID THAT VIRGIN ISLANDERS SHOULD BE ENTITLED TO VOTE IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS.

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8. PUBLIC MEETINGS. THE IMMIGRATION PROBLEM DOMINATED THE PUBLIC MEETING IN ST. THOMAS AND ALSO FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN THE PUBLIC MEETINGS IN ST. JOHN AND ST. CROIX. NUMEROUS STATEMENTS REFLECTED CONCERN ABOUT THE LARGE NUMBER OF ALIENS AND "NATURALIZED ALIENS" (SIC) FROM OTHER EASTERN CARIBBEAN ISLANDS RESIDING IN THE US VIRGIN ISLANDS. A NUMBER OF SPEAKERS STATED THEIR WISH FOR THE VIRGIN ISLANDS TO EXERCISE CONTROL OVER THE IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. SPEAKERS AT EACH OF THE PUBLIC MEETINGS INDICATED THEIR FEAR THAT "NATIVE VIRGIN ISLANDERS" ARE ON THE "BRINK OF EXTINCTION" BECAUSE OF THE IMMIGRATION POLICIES OF THE UNITED STATES AND MANY EXPRESSED DISSATISFACTION THAT EDUCATIONAL, MEDICAL AND SOCIAL BENEFITS WERE BEING ENJOYED BY "THOSE FROM OUTSIDE" RATHER THAN NATIVE VIRGIN ISLANDERS. ONE WOMAN SAID, "WE ARE STRUGGLING FOR SURVIVAL. OUR RIGHTS UNDER THE CONSTITUTION ARE BEING VIOLATED AND THE RIGHT TO SURVIVE IN OUR HOMELAND IS BEING THREATENED." OTHER SPEAKERS ASKED THAT RESIDENTS OF

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS BE GIVEN THE RIGHT TO VOTE IN PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS. SOME SPEAKERS INDICATED DISSATISFACTION WITH PUBLIC EDUCATION, COMMENTING PARTICULARLY ON INAPPROPRIATE CURRICULA. AN ADDITIONAL CONCERN EXPRESSED BY MANY OF THOSE WHO SPOKE AT THE PUBLIC MEETING ON ST. JOHN WAS DISSATISFACTION AT EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE NATIONAL PARK THERE. CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED THAT THERE IS ALREADY TOO LITTLE LAND AVAILABLE TO RESIDENTS OF ST. JOHN. THE BEST ATTENDED (150-200, LONGEST (2000-2330) AND MOST HEATED PUBLIC MEETING TOOK PLACE AT THE SENATE BUILDING IN ST. CROIX. AGAIN, IMMIGRATION WAS THE PRINCIPAL FOCUS OF DISCONTENT, ALTHOUGH THE OTHER ISSUES REFERRED TO ABOVE WERE ALSO RAISED. CONCERN WAS ALSO EXPRESSED ABOUT ST. CROIX'S "DEPENDENCY" ON ST. THOMAS. AT EACH MEETING, SPEAKERS EMPHASIZED THEIR PRIDE AT BEING CONFIDENTIAL

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AMERICANS AND SATISFACTION WITH THE ORDERLY FUNCTIONING OF DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PROCESSES. WE HAVE POUCHED A PETITION PRESENTED TO MISSION ON ST. CROIX TO THE DEPARTMENT (SCHIELE - IO/UNP).

9. STATUS: WHILE SOME SPEAKERS INDICATED AN INTEREST IN GREATER AUTONOMY AND GREATER CONTROL OVER LEGISLATION AFFECTING THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, NO ONE INDICATED ANY INTEREST IN INDEPENDENCE FOR THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. ON THE CONTRARY, SPEAKER AFTER SPEAKER IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA."

10. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS. VUNIBOBO EXPRESSED REPEATEDLY GREAT SATISFACTION AND PLEASURE AT THE WAY THE MISSION HAD PROGRESSED. OTHER MISSION MEMBERS AS WELL AS SECRETARIAT PERSONNEL ALSO STATED THAT THE MISSION HAD GONE VERY WELL. GOVERNOR KING EXPRESSED SIMILAR VIEWS WHICH HE SAID HE WOULD BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN. VUNIBOBO, SEALY AND BACHROUCH ALL COMMENTED THAT THE VIRGIN ISLANDS IS CLEARLY A "DEVELOPED" TERRITORY WITHOUT THE GREAT NEED FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES SO EVIDENT IN OTHER NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES. MISSION MEMBERS AND SECRETARIAT OFFICIALS SEEMED IMPRESSED WITH THE OPENNESS AND FRANKNESS OF POLITICAL DISCOURSE IN THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.

11. VISITING MISSION REPORT. SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL KUO (PRC), HEAD OF THE CARIBBEAN DIVISION OF THE SECRETARIAT, SAID HE WILL PREPARE A WORKING PAPER FOR C-24'S PLENARY CONSIDERATION OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, PROBABLY IN AUGUST. KUO ASSURED MISOFF THAT THE

REPORT WOULD BE "FACTUAL AND OBJECTIVE." VUNIBOBO  
REPEATEDLY ASSURED VARIOUS AUDIENCES IN THE V.I. THAT  
THE MISSION'S REPORT WOULD BE PREPARED IN CLOSE CONSULTATION  
WITH THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY.  
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12. RECOMMENDATION: USUN RECOMMENDS THAT THE  
DEPARTMENT EXPRESS ITS GRATITUDE TO GOVERNOR KING AT  
AN APPROPRIATELY HIGH LEVEL.  
LEONARD

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** PFOR, PDEV, OVIP, PORG, VQ, FJ, ML, TU, TD, UNGA, UN, C-24  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009